

# Tanker is topic

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Motorists and onlookers in Sheridan, Thomas and Logan counties might have caught a view of a caravan of trucks making their way through the area with an oversized cargo.

Crew members of Lone Star Transportation, Abilene, Texas, stopped over night in Hoxie before leaving early this morning hauling a 143-foot long, 17-foot tall surge tank. The tank weighs 232,000 pounds.

"We picked it up in Cambridge, Minn., and it's going to Louisiana to a refining company," said Mike Muehlberger, driver of the truck hauling the tank.

Special equipment and permits are required to move such a massive cargo.

"It's real dangerous work because we are real tall and top heavy. That's the reason for the special routing.

"Each state works with our company to match up our route so



JAN KATZ ACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

Lone Star Transportation drivers haul an oil refinery surge tank from Minnesota to Louisiana using a route which took them through Sheridan, Thomas and Logan Counties early this morning. Seen here leaving Hoxie, the crew headed west to the 9-mile corner where they then headed south on U.S. Highway 83.

the place you leave one state matches up with the place you enter the next state," Muehlberger said.

The crew is limited to the amount of time it can be on the road and where they can drive.

"Some of the bridges are too old for us to go over and some of them we have to go over at 5 miles per hour. Some towns have curfews and there are times we can't run when school buses are in the area,"

Muehlberger said.

Logan County Sheriff Pat Parsons said his experience with the big rigs has not always been positive. While he was not familiar with Lone Star, he is concerned about some of the companies' procedures.

"In general, the super loads are fudging their permits and they are not calling law enforcement.

"We've had \$22,000 damage to the Highway 83 cantilevers at the railroad crossings. There have been

four separate incidents where the cantilevers have been hit within the last year," Parsons said.

He said he's concerned most of the companies fail to notify authorities about coming into an area.

"My question to the companies is if they are doing their own traffic control why they aren't notifying law enforcement.

"I caught one crew red-handed the other day. I caught a flag man lifting the railroad cross arm when

it was down. I was in line on the other side and he didn't see me, so I got out and asked him what he was doing," Parsons said.

Parsons gave the man a warning citation for the incident. "I know (super loads) have to exist and they have to work, but they need to follow the rules," he said.

The tank being hauled through the area is not the largest one crew supervisor Kelly Davis has hauled. "The longest one I ever hauled

was 318-feet. That was from Idaho to Texas, and it was too long," he quipped.

Too tall to get under most overpasses, the Lone Star crew made its way along U.S. Highway 24 to the 9-mile corner and then turned south on to U.S. Highway 83.

Muehlberger said he's driven big rigs for the past 13 years, and despite the danger he said he drives "because the pay is good, it's good work."

## Colby native is year's first speaker for Dr. Pickerill Lecture Series

By Debbie Schwanke

Colby Community College

Dr. Mark Hansen, one of the nation's leading scholars on American politics, will be the first speaker featured this year as part of the Dr. Max Pickerill Lecture Series at Colby Community College.



M. Hansen

He will be speaking on Thursday, March 17, at 7:30 p.m. in the Cultural Arts Center on campus. A 1977 graduate of Colby High

School, Dr. Hansen is the son of John and Joyce Hansen of Colby.

Following the controversial Presidential election in 2000, Hansen was appointed as the coordinator of the Task Force on the Federal Election System for the National Commission on Election Reform. The task force was co-chaired by former Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. The task force was charged with providing information regarding federal election practices and analyzing the effects of those practices. The final report of that commission, "To Assure Pride and Confidence in the Electoral Process," served as the model for important measures in the

Help America Vote Act (HAVA), the landmark federal legislation passed in 2002.

Hansen is the dean of social sciences and the Charles L. Hutchinson Distinguished Service Professor in the department of political science at the University of Chicago.

His research has focused on interest groups, citizen activism and public opinion. He is the author of two books: Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America (1993) with Steven Rosenstone and Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981 (1991).

In 1999, he received the Heinz Eulau Award from the American

Political Science Association for the Best Article Published in the American Political Science Review in 1998. He also received the Outstanding Book Award from the National Conference of Black Political Scientists in 1995.

In 2003, he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Hansen's current research focuses on public opinion, public budgeting and politicians' inferences from the outcomes of elections.

In addition to his distinguished scholarship, Hansen is an experienced administrator. He joined the University of Chicago faculty in

1986 as assistant professor in political science, was named an associate professor in 1992 and a professor in political science in 1994.

He served as chair of the political science department from 1995-98, when he was named associate provost for education and research.

He received his undergraduate degree in 1981 from the University of Kansas, a Master's of Philosophy

degree in 1983 and his Ph.D. in 1987 from Yale University.

Everyone is invited to attend the lecture. There is no admission charge.

The Dr. Max Pickerill Lecture Series is funded annually by anonymous donations.

For more information, contact lecture series chair Cathy Gordon at the college.

All Roads Lead To....



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## Groundwater District readies for 30th annual meeting

The 30th annual meeting of the Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4 will be held Wednesday, Feb. 16 in Goodland at the Best Western Buffalo Inn beginning at 1 p.m. local time (MST).

The agenda includes:

- Approval of 29th Annual Meeting Minutes
- 2004 Audit Report
- 2006 Operating Budget
- Election of County Board Positions

Sherman/Wallace County - Position 4

Thomas County - Position 6

- Unfinished or Other Business
- Ogallala Aquifer Sub-unit Protocol Discussion
- Irrigation Transition Assistance

"This meeting remains one of the best opportunities for district members and others to see how the district works and to help direct what it will be doing in the future," said Wayne Bossert, district manager.

"Included in the annual meeting packet will be: water level data;

water use data by county, by system, by year; and several other new informational items," he said.

In the event of inclement weather, local radio stations will be used to notify the public of the meeting cancellation and for re-scheduling information.

## Break-in brings two arrests

BREWSTER — An afternoon break-in at a chemical company ended with the arrest of two area men.

Thomas County Undersheriff Jason R. Moses said Thursday morning that authorities were alerted shortly before 6 p.m. on Wednesday of two men breaking into Berkgren Chemical Company at Brewster.

Moses said an eyewitness saw Jeffrey W. Murphy, 27, Goodland, and Charles D. Mitchell, 50, Colby, "forcefully enter into the office and leave a short time later."

Murphy was arrested for burglary, theft, criminal trespass, possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia, Moses said.

He said Mitchell was arrested for

burglary, theft and criminal trespass.

Berkgren Chemical is located just south of the Interstate 70 Exit 36 interchange, and Kansas Highway Patrol troopers in the area located and arrested the two men.

They are currently in the Thomas County Jail pending charges being filed by Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick.

News tips to:  
785  
462-3963

## Two appear in Hoxie court

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

HOXIE — Two Sheridan County men were in court this morning and one pleaded guilty to driving under the influence.

Rex Storer, Sr., Hoxie, pleaded guilty to his third DUI and waived his rights to a trial.

Accompanied by his court-appointed attorney, Bruce Flipse, Colby, Storer told District Judge Glenn Schiffner he drank and drove his car on Dec. 31.

Sheridan County Attorney Mike Haas, as part of a plea agreement, dismissed charges of not having proof of liability insurance and driving on a suspended driver's license for Storer's plea of guilty to the felony DUI.

Since this is his third DUI, Storer faces one year in the county jail and a fine of not less than \$1,500 and not more than \$2,500.

Schiffner told Storer as part of sentencing, which will take place at 10 a.m. on March 11, he will be re-

quired to serve a minimum of 90 days sentence, two of which must be in the county jail and the remaining 88 on either house arrest or work release.

Storer remains on a recognizance bond until sentencing.

Also in court this morning was Richard Carpenter, Selden.

Carpenter is being sued by the city of Selden for maintaining his property in such a way it allegedly creates a private or public nuisance.

Carpenter told Schiffner he had not retained an attorney to represent him and denied that his property was a problem.


Selden City Attorney Ken Eland told Schiffner that contact with Carpenter and the city has been ongoing for "over a year," and the city wanted the case to "move along."

Schiffner gave Carpenter and Eland until March 1 to exchange a witness list and prepare for a pretrial on April 8.

A trial has been set for 1:30 p.m. on May 6.

## How to contact our reporters:


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We're holding  
more in our  
hands than  
paper.

The Saint Francis Academy has once again been awarded the state of Kansas SRS contracts to provide Foster Care Reintegration and Family Preservation services in Region 4 (roughly the western half of Kansas).

Thanks to our dedicated staff and resource families, the local SRS offices, community organizations, schools, judicial offices, churches and everyone who works to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of Kansas children and families.



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